

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A combined communication and asset locating and tracking system, the system comprising:

a substantially wireless high resolution locating and tracking system including a plurality of receivers configured to be located in different locations in a facility, the different locations including at least one of floors, rooms, corridors, common areas and portions thereof within the facility, the substantially wireless high resolution locating and tracking system including tags that are attached to assets, each tag lacking any voice communication capability; and

a substantially wireless communication system including a plurality of access points and voice-activated communicators that are separate and distinct from the tags, wherein the plurality of receivers of the locating and tracking system uses a different communication technology than the access points of the wireless communication system;

wherein the locating and tracking system and the communication system are linked so that a specific location of an asset having one of the plurality of tags attached thereto is determinable by using a voice command spoken into one of the voice-activated communicators.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the voice-activated communicators are completely hands-free operable by including means for detecting an audible cue to activate the communicator.

3. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the audible cue is a clapping sound.

4. (Original) The system of claim 2, wherein the audible cue is a verbal command.

5. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising means for generating an alarm if an asset is near an unauthorized area.

6. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising means for linking the locating and tracking system and the communication system to non-location information about an asset.

7. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the location is a sub-area within a room of the facility.

8. (Currently amended) A system for locating and tracking persons or assets, the system comprising:

a plurality of tags, each tag being configured to be assigned to a person or asset and each tag being configured to wirelessly transmit a unique identifier identifying each tag, each tag lacking any voice communication capability;

a plurality of receivers positioned at known locations in a facility, each receiver being configured to detect the unique identifiers for tags positioned near the receiver;

a locating and tracking computer coupled to the plurality of receivers for monitoring the location of the tags in the facility;

a plurality of voice-activated substantially wireless communicators that are separate and distinct from the tags; and

a plurality of transceivers positioned at known spaced-apart locations in the facility, each transceiver being configured to send and receive communication signals to and from the communicators;

wherein the plurality of receivers uses a different communication technology than the plurality of transceivers;

wherein the tags are located and tracked in response to a voice command received by one of the plurality of voice-activated substantially wireless communicators.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the voice-activated communicators are completely hands-free operable.

10. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the voice command identifies at least one of a person or asset, further comprising means for linking the voice command to location information for the corresponding person or asset.

11. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the voice command identifies at least one of a person or asset, further comprising means for linking the voice command to non-location information about the corresponding person or asset.

12. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the tags and receivers operate using a first substantially wireless transmission means and the communicators and receivers operate using a second substantially wireless transmission means.

13. (Original) The system of claim 12, wherein the tags and receivers operate using one of radio frequency and infrared transmissions and the communicators and transceivers operate using a voice over IP communications protocol.

14. (Currently amended) A method for monitoring the location of persons or assets, the method comprising the steps of: assigning a unique identifier to each of a plurality of tags, each tag lacking any voice communication capability; assigning each tag to a person or asset; positioning a plurality of receivers at different locations in a facility; receiving at the receivers unique identifier transmissions from the tags; assigning a plurality of communicators to a plurality of persons, the plurality of communicators being separate and distinct from the plurality of tags; assigning a plurality of transceivers to different locations in the facility, wherein the plurality of receivers uses a different communication technology than the plurality of transceivers; receiving at a transceiver a voice command from one of the plurality of persons spoken into one of the plurality of communicators, the voice command relating to at least one of the persons and assets; linking the voice command to the corresponding tag identifier

information; and identifying a location of the at least one person or asset in response to the voice command.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising the steps of: detecting the presence of a tag proximate to a secure area; detecting a voice command requesting access to the secure area; identifying the person associated with the detected tag; comparing a voice characteristic of the detected voice command with a known voice characteristic of the person associated with the detected tag; and granting access to the entry of the secure area if the voice characteristic of the detected voice command matches the known voice characteristic of the person associated with the detected tag.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, further comprising the steps of: continuously tracking the location of a tag; and initiating a voice message relating to the location of the tag.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising the step of determining whether the tag has entered an unauthorized location.

18. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the voice command includes a command directed to turning an asset on or off.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of turning the asset on or off based on the voice command.

20. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising the step of identifying the location of the person or asset based on the voice command.